

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 PM-03 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05
CIAE-00 EB-04 IGA-01 OC-01 CCO-00 L-01 /050 W
-----161150Z 057411 /12

P R 161027Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6779
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
SECDEF WASHDC
JCS WASHDC
CJCS WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 1934

LIMDIS

FOR NEA/ATHERTON, EUR/HARTMAN AND PM/GELB

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CENTO, PFOR
SUBJECT: CENTO MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

REF: ANKARA 1094, DTG 120950Z FEB 77 (NOTAL)

1. AFTER DISCUSSING TALKING POINTS WITH AMBASADOR AND U.S. ELEMENT CENTO, NEA/RA DIRECTOR PALMER, ACCOMPANIED BY EMBOFF, CALLED ON SECRETARY-GENERAL BAYULKEN MARCH 15. REGARDING USG PLEDGE OF SUPPORT FOR CENTO MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM, PALMER SAID THAT NO RPT NO FUNDS HAVE BEEN INCLUDED IN FY 78 SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR THIS PROJECT AND THAT CURRENT USG POLICY IS TO DRASTICALLY REDUCE, IF NOT ELIMINATE, GRANT MILITARY AID. ADDITIONALLY, PALMER POINTED OUT THAT CONGRESS HAS REQUESTED TERMINATION OF GRANT MILITARY ASSISTANCE BY END OF THIS YEAR AND THAT NO NEW GRANT PROJECTS ARE
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LIKELY TO RECEIVE ADMINISTRATION OR CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL. FRANKLY, PALMER CONTINUED, ANOTHER PROBLEM WE HAD IN SEEKING FUNDS FOR THE MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS PROJECT WAS LACK OF EVIDENCE THAT THE REGIONAL MEMBERS WERE WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE THE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES REQUIRED.

2. BAYULKEN RESPONDED FIRMLY THAT HE HOPED THESE POLICY CON-

SIDERATIONS DID NOT MEAN THAT THE USG IS NOT GOING TO FULFILL ITS COMMITMENT, MADE BY THE FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE, TO PROVIDE \$5 MILLION FOR THE MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS PROJECT. IN THIS CONTEXT, BAYULKEN REFERRED TO BILATERAL AGREEMENTS, UNDER WHICH USG IS ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF CENTO, IN WHICH THERE IS UNDERTAKING TO PROVIDE REGIONAL COUNTRIES WITH BOTH MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID CONSISTENT WITH PURPOSES OF THE ALLIANCE. BAYULKEN ALSO ASKED WHETHER IT IS POSSIBLE TO FUND THE PROGRAM BY MEANS OF CREDITS. THE IMPORTANT THING, HE SAID, IS TO MAKE FUNDS AVAILABLE TO GET THE PROGRAM GOING. HE DID NOT RULE OUT EXPLORING POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF FUNDING.

3. IN RESPONSE, PALMER AND EMBOFF OPINED THAT IT WOULD BE UNREALISITC TO TRY TO REVIVE THE PROGRAM AS ORIGINALLY FORMULATED. THEY SUGGESTED BAYULKEN MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER A THOROUGH RECONCEPTUALIZATION WITH A VIEW TO MAKING THE PROJECT A REGIONAL UNDERTAKING, RATHER THAN SOMETHING THE US WOULD SUPPORT UNILATERALLY. PERHAPS THE COMBINED MILITARY PLANNING STAFF (CMPS) AND THE PERMANENT MILITARY DEPUTIES GROUP (PMDG) MIGHT REVIEW THE PROJECT PROPOSAL WITH A VIEW TO MAKING IT A GENUINE MULTILATERAL EFFORT. BAYULKEN INDICATED HE WOULD DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH CMPS AND PMDG, AND SAID HE WOULD CERTAINLY PURSUE IT FURTHER DURING HIS WASHINGTON ROUND OF CONSULTATIONS, MARCH 25-30.

4. COMMENT: LOOKING FORWARD TO DISCUSSION OF THIS SUBJECT DURING BAYULKEN'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND PROBABLY AT THE CENTO MILITARY COMMITTEE MEETING, MARCH 30-31, WE SUGGEST THE FOLLOWING TALKING POINTS:
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--IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR THE USG TO ALLOCATE FUNDS FOR THE MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM THIS YEAR, ALTHOUGH WE ARE MINDFUL OF THE PLEDGE MADE BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE AT THE 1975 MINISTERIAL MEETING;

--THE USG IS UNDER SEVERE CONSTRAINTS REGARDING THE FUNDING OF GRANT MILITARY AID PROJECTS AND POLICY DECISIONS OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION MAY CLOSE OFF THIS SOURCE OF FUNDING IN THE FUTURE;

--WE SUGGEST THAT CENTO, NEVERTHELESS, REVIEW THE MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM CONCEPT TO DETERMINE WHETHER A REGIONAL APPROACH TO FUNDING, INVOLVING CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ALL ALLIES, MIGHT BE FEASIBLE; AND

--FINALLY, WE SUGGEST THAT CENTO COMPLETE ITS REVIEW BEFORE JUNE 30 SO THAT TIMELY CONSULTATIONS CAN BE HELD AMONG THE ALLIES IF A REFORMULATED PROPOSAL IS CONSIDERED FEASIBLE.

5. WE CONSIDER THIS APPROACH TO BE A SOUND AND DEFENDABLE
ONE, WHILE CONTINUING TO BELIEVE THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE USG
NOT BE SEEN AS FLATLY RENEGING ON THE UNCONDITIONAL 1975 PLEDGE.
MACOMBER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY ASSISTANCE, MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS, REGIONAL DEFENSE ORGANIZATIONS, COMMUNICATION LINES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 16-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977ANKARA01934
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770090-0049
Format: TEL
From: ANKARA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770356/aaaabwsk.tel
Line Count: 121
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 5ff680b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 77 ANKARA 1094
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30-Sep-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3097241
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CENTO MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM
TAGS: PFOR, MARR, MASS, US, TU, CENTO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5ff680b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009